

## ABSTRACT

Systems and methods for providing access to a time-slotted communication channel are disclosed. Access to the channel is granted by possession of a pseudo-token transmitted between communication units with packets, such that the recipient of a data packet receives the pseudo-token with the packet. Communication units may be assigned reserved slots during which the pseudo-token automatically is assigned to the communication unit. Further, communication units may be assigned priority levels according to which contention contests may be resolved. Reserved slots and priority rankings may be used in combination to accommodate varying levels of QoS required or requested by communication units on the channel.